MILITARY AND NAVAL NOTES.

GENERAL J. S. PATON, Bengal Staff Corps, wore five war medals, and had been 27 times mentioned in despatches for his services in the Gwalior, Sutlej, Punjab, Afreedee (1850) and Mutiny Campaigns, in all of which he took an active part; yet he died a simple C. B. How different must the record have been of the honours and rewards for the campaigns that preserved to us our Indian Empire, from the big distributions which now-a-days follow every little action. One is not disposed to grudge soldiers their decorations, &c., but in honouring the warriors of Egypt and the Soudan, men like General Paton, hidden away in the obscurity of retirement, are apt to be forgotten, notwithstanding their well-established claims. Considering the large number of meritorious officers there are for whom there is no prospect of recognition under the present system, it would be a gracious act on the part of the Sovereign to issue a special *Gazette*—to mark the services of those survivors of the old campaigns, who would otherwise be shut out from all hope of promotion in and appointment to the several orders of knighthood. A man who was 27 times mentioned, and filled the important office of Quarter-master-General in India, deserved a better fate than to die a C.B. There are two orders specially applicable to Indian service—the C.S.I. and C.I.E. General Paton might surely have received knighthood in one of these.

The German Reichstag recently sanctioned the sum demanded by the Imperial Admiralty for the extension of the Navy, and provision was made in the Budget for 1889-90 for the construction of four ironclads, two iron-plated vessels, a cruiser, and two torpedo boats, and the designs have now been completed and the work commenced. It has been divided between the Imperial Dockyard at Kiel, the Vulcan Company at Stettin, the Germania Works at Kiel, the Imperial Dockyard at Wilhelmshafen, and the Schichau Works at Elbing. The total cost is estimated at £2,760,000. All the plans have been worked out at the Admiralty, with the exception of those for the machinery and boilers of the four largest vessels, which have been supplied by the Germania Works at Kiel. The German Admiralty has given orders for the formation of three naval divisions, which are to be employed for giving practical instruction to the men of the fleet. The first will be employed for evolutions, and will consist of three ironclad corvettes and a despatch boat. The second will consist of the two flotillas of reserve torpedo vessels, each numbering one torpedo vessel of 359 tons and eight first-class torpedo boats of 86 tons, and they will be employed to attack the first division. The third division will consist of four ironclad gunboats of the Viper class (1,100 tons), and it will be manœuvred in the North Sea, with Wilhelmshafen as its headquarters. The torpedo boats are all of considerable size, and might if necessary be employed in the open sea, although the smaller ones are intended for the defence of inland waters, such as the lagoons of the Baltic and the sundry estuaries of the North Sea. Altogether, the German navy will, it is estimated, have 165 torpedo boats by the end of next year.

There is a rumour, says the *Irish Times*, that a number of Canadian horses are about to be imported for remounts for the cavalry. The chief recommendation is that Canadian horses possess stamina; they are cheap, but when tried some years ago they did not give satisfaction in the regiment they were sent to. Economy, however, is the order of the day, so probably the rumour may turn out true." Amen our contemporary's remark that more Canadian horses are being imported, he is quite ahead of taste. As to the remounts obtained from this source some years ago having given dissatisfaction—in other words, proved a failure—the very reverse was the case. All the best judges in England who inspected the purchases at Woolwich on their arrival, pronounced them excellent material for the purpose for which they were required. They had a liberal dash of quality derived from the Exmoor and Leamington blood, and freely distributed amongst their descendants that the whole of the home market was thrown into the opposite scale, and for the present the matter of purchasing is in abeyance in deference to political pressure.

The new French military law has just come into force. The law was passed on July 15. Its principal enactments are those which reduce the term of service with the colours from five to three years, which rearrange the periods of service in each category of the Reserve, and which greatly limit the exemptions from service hitherto allowed, and the privileges formerly accorded to the so-called one-year volunteers. The main results of the law are therefore immediately to increase the strength of the Army by annihilation, by renewing the liability for service of five annual classes who, under the old law, were exempt. This is a reply to the German law of 1888, which by a similar provision added 800,000 trained men to the supply available. The new French law places 600,000 men in the prime of life at the disposal of the Government in case of war. Secondly, the new law, by increasing the number of recruits each year, provides for a rapid increase during the next few years of the number of trained men, and by the diminution of exemptions and of men admitted to a partial training ensures a higher general average of efficiency. Lastly, the number of men being increased, the numbers assigned to each unit, will be larger, so that a sound training will be facilitated; and this object will also be promoted by the attention to be given to the training of reserve officers.

Major-General Sir Reginald Gipps, K.C.B., becomes Lieutenant-General on the Active List in consequence of Sir Henry Torrens's death, Colonel W. [illegible], succeeding to the vacancy among the [illegible] becomes a Man joined the [illegible] in the 41st Foot, July 12, 1839; Captain, December 29, 1854; Major, April 18, 1865; Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel, October 7, 1874; Lieutenant-Colonel, May 23, 1877; Colonel, October 7, 1879; was placed on half-pay, May 27, 1882; commanded 4 Reserve depot from September 6 to October 30, 1882, and a regimental district from December 19, 1882, to December 19, 1887. He served in the Eastern Campaign of 1854-55, including the battle of Alma, repulse of the sortie on October 26, battle of Inkerman, attacks of June 18 and September 8, and siege and fall of Sebastopol (medal with three clasps, Knight of the Legion of Honour, and Turkish medal).

The fitting of the Handy, gunboat, at Portsmouth, for the Elswick first with a special modification of the [illegible] gun, is rapidly proceeding with. This gun is designed for high angle fire in order to take the place of the old mortar, which we have, but the Americans have not, discarded. The flat trajectory and peculiar mountings of the older breech-loading guns, as fitted at present, entirely prevent their being utilised for dropping shells into a fort or trenches, or on to the deck of a ship. This was very clearly shown at Suakin, where most of our shot from the gunboats flew straight over the heads of the Arabs, who were sheltered in disused quarries and pits. Attempts were made to explode shells in their neighbourhood by the use of time-fuze, but even then the fragments were carried along in a straight horizontal line on account of their high initial velocity and flat trajectory at the moment of bursting. The Elswick, 9·2-inch gun, weighs close upon 24 tons, and the vessel requires a good deal of strengthening to receive it.

The steady increase of the Russian Artillery has induced the Vienna *Die Reichswehr* to compare the number of field-guns of Russia and France with those of Germany and Austria, with a view to showing the inferiority of the Allies in that arm. Russia will soon have, in Europe, 3,320 field-guns; France, 2,880; total, 6,200. Germany has 2,884; Austria will have at the beginning of next year, 1,776; total, 4,660. The *Reichswehr*, however, leaves out Italy, with 1,800 guns, in addition which fully restores the equilibrium between Russia and France on one side, and the Triple Alliance on the other. But it is justified in adding for the increase of the Austrian Artillery, which, in the opinion of our best military critics, has been neglected since the introduction of the Uchatius steel bronze guns.

The question of smokeless powders, and of explosives generally, continues to excite the greatest interest in the military circles of the Continent, and the papers are full of paragraphs relating to particular manufactures, of whose truth it is often difficult to judge. For example, the *Wafenschmied von Suhl* states, and the *Allgemeine Schweitzerische Militar Zeitung* and other papers repeat the statement, that General Kuster, of the powder factory of Spandau, the inventor of the German smokeless powder, has been rewarded by a gift of 50,000 marks; while Professor Schnibler, to whom the invention has been ascribed, has been honoured with a title for his share in the experiments, and two assistants who participated in the researches have received 3,000 marks.

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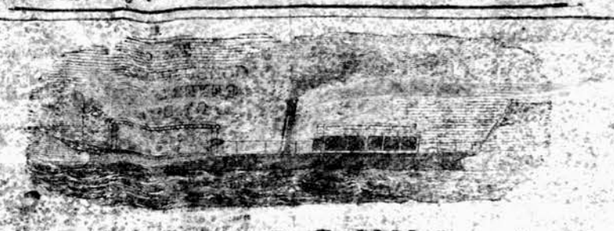
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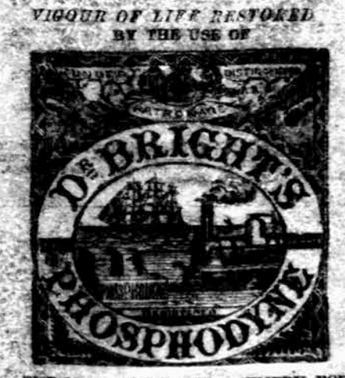

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